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of production may lose their economic significance; for example, the flint quarries upon which the life of the Danish communities once depended were deserted after bronze displaced the flint ax.

Judged by its fundamental hypotheses as well as by its method, *The Economic Synthesis* seems to hold forth scant reassurance to the science with which it deals, though it is the result of a laudable ambition and an amazing erudition. Substantially, it stands as a nicely arranged system of logic constructed by passing through the crucible of Hegelian metaphysics the postulates of physiocratic and English classical economics, tempered by the Marxian categories of "exploitation," "surplus value," and "class struggle."

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*A Short History of English Liberalism.* By W. LYON BLEASE.

New York: Putnam, 1913. 8vo, pp. 374. \$3.50.

The activity of the English Liberal party in recent years has provoked considerable literary output. Winston Churchill, Herbert Samuel, and other leaders have written directly from the firing line; we have L. T. Hobhouse' excellent study in the "Home University Series," as well as a great mass of less distinguished writing inspired by the titanic struggles in which the party has been engaged. Mr. Blease's book, however, is neither a polemic nor an apology. Indeed, incidentally to his task as historian, he performs with some success the ungrateful function of candid friend to the party. As faithfully does he record failures as celebrate victories and triumphs. Students will welcome his history because of its complete fairness and sincerity.

"By Liberalism," he says, "I mean not a policy, but a habit of mind. It is the disposition of the man who looks upon each of his fellows as of equal worth with himself. . . . He assumes as the basis of his activity that he has no right to interfere with any other person's attempts to employ his natural powers in what he conceives to be the best way." Conversely, the positive side of Liberalism leads to "active steps to remove the artificial barriers which impede development."

From this standpoint the author traces the course of Liberalism from the reign of George III to the present, rigorously applying to the intervening statesmen the test of the principle he has set forth. While the method has advantage in focusing attention on the advance of reform, on the whole it is at the cost of clearness. Few public men in the past have subscribed to his complete creed. Few do so today. The result

is that Gladstone, Bright, Macaulay, even Disraeli, appear at one time as apostles of reform, at another time as Tories and reactionaries. Asquith and McKenna are roundly scored on woman's suffrage, while Sir Edward Grey, among the elect in this particular, as a foreign minister has been "watched with dismay by the most Liberal of his followers."

The author relies entirely on speeches and letters for his material. In consequence there is no deep delving into the fundamental causes of Liberalism. He portrays the advance of Liberal ideas without showing us the primary elements instrumental in their formation. Fulness of quotation enhances the value of the book but there is a lack of assimilation. While official documents have obviously been carefully studied, they have been handled as in a law court—there has been no going behind the face of the record. This probably explains some curious omissions and some distortion of emphasis. Francis Place fails to obtain recognition in connection with the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1824, though his activity, as Webb has shown, was enormous. The fecundating influence of Chartism on the Liberalism of the early Victorian era is passed over in silence. The work of the Christian Socialists, the Positivists, and a whole host of influences are neglected in favor of the purely political side of the subject. The author fails to set Liberalism in the perspective of the whole life of the people. He leaves the impression that the advancement or checking of Liberal ideas was the sole factor in every political situation.

These are grave defects in what purports to be a history of Liberalism. They are the unfortunate results of the scheme and method of treatment. Happily there are some solid merits to counterbalance them in part. The continuity of the Liberal tradition is imposingly set forth. Amid the welter of partisan politics and despite temporary reverses, Mr. Blease shows us how the forces of progress, now silently, now amid confused trappings, march resistlessly forward. The Liberal principle advances surely and steadily along the lines of religious equality, political enfranchisement, factory reform, the reconstruction of the colonial system, free trade, and higher ideals in international dealings.

The differentiation of the Manchester school and the philosophic Radicals is accomplished with fine skill:

Conclusions which in the one case were reached by reasoning from accepted principles of human nature were reached in the other by the ways of practical experience. . . . The Radical was a free trader because protection benefited one class at the expense of another. The manufacturer was a free trader because protection, by raising the price of corn, made his workpeople

wretched. . . . The Manchester school was essentially a middle-class school. The Radicals had nothing in common but their radicalism.

Equally successful is his handling of the "little Englanders" of the Boer War period. Their attitude is shown to be of exactly the same temper as that which guided Gladstone in his foreign policy.

Even if Mr. Blease's work does fall short of perfection, he has given us a valuable study, particularly valuable in its wealth of quotation, which lines up for us in black and white the position of nearly all the eminent English statesmen of the nineteenth century. The reviewer notices an obvious misprint on p. 90: the Gordon riots did not occur in June, 1880, but in 1780.

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*Economics of Interurban Railways.* By LOUIS E. FISCHER. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1914. 12mo, pp. ix+116. \$1.50 net.

The author of this book presents an analysis of the results of actual operation of a number of interurban railways in the United States and his conclusions therefrom with respect to costs of construction, earnings, expenses, and profit. The book is written "for the purpose of enabling the layman to comprehend fundamental conditions essential to an economically successful road, and the investor to discriminate between fundamentally good and bad electric interurban railway securities."

The operating data, which have been painstakingly collected, will be useful to both layman and engineer. The deductions worked out by the author will be of interest to the latter but should be used with caution by the former lest he be misled in some respects.

Interurbans and their fields of operation are divided into two general groups, designated as "normal" and "abnormal." As one follows this classification through the book it becomes apparent that by "normal" the author means "ideal" or a near approach to it. By "abnormal" is meant unfavorable field and inadequate equipment, a combination not infrequently found on existing roads. Tributary population is classified among primary terminals, secondary terminals, and intermediate towns. Rural population is ignored, for reasons not fully convincing. To secure useful data on per capita earnings from these different classes of population, an extended analysis is made of actual earnings. It is found that the size of the principal terminal has little effect on interurban earnings, and that roads without so-called intermediate terminals have fairly con-